

Top Tips for Making Good Hiring Decisions

In today's competitive job market, getting good employees depends mainly on wages and benefits, right? The truth is, finding good employees depends a good deal more on your abilities as an employer, to make a good hiring decision. Even when you are desperate to fill vacancies, there are some important interviewing techniques you should be practicing in order to find the right "fit" for your job opening. Remember that as a hiring manager you aren't successful when you turn applicants away. Below are some tips that will help boost your chances for getting a great employee.

1. Is the applicant qualified to perform the job? Think twice before setting yourself up for failure by placing an applicant into a job that is outside of his or her own knowledge, skills and abilities. While hiring someone who remotely matches your requirements may seem the wise thing to do, if you don't consider skills & qualifications, it will probably come back to haunt you, costing more money in the long run. Learn how to identify and evaluate an applicant's skills based upon the job requirements.

2. Does the applicant have employment goals? Employers should be cautious when hiring people who don't know what they want to do. If the applicant is going through some "I don't know what I want to be when I grow up" type of uncertainty, which does happen frequently, do yourself a favor and ask about specific employment goals rather than asking about career ambitions. Remember that without goals of some kind in place, the applicant probably has no clear direction for success.

3. Does the applicant present a professional appearance? A poor personal appearance can be the first and most tell-tale clue about the ambitions of your prospective applicant. First impressions really count, so if the applicant doesn't present well, or is unable to dress the part, it's a safe bet that they may not fit in with your team. Remember that smoking is not illegal, but you can stress limits and you should inform applicants if your worksite is a non-smoking environment. Keep in mind also, that you can call excessive body jewelry into question, especially when it presents a safety or health hazard in the job.

4. Is the applicant enthusiastic? An applicant doesn't have to act like they've just won the lottery jackpot, but it's important that they express some enthusiasm for the job they are applying for. If not, it might signal poor work performance issues, poor work ethic, or other issues that you cannot afford. If you don't recognize any enthusiasm, make it a quick interview, thank them for applying, and start looking elsewhere.

5. Has the applicant established and communicated the value they will bring to the job? If your applicant gives the impression that they are only interested in "what's in it for me", you may want to think twice about hiring. Ask questions about what it is the applicant has to offer for your business and look for specific qualities in their answers. If the applicant cannot bring value to the company, they are probably not qualified to do the job.

6. How does the applicant talk about past employers? Sometimes, applicants will want to tell you something bad, negative or some other horror story about a current or past employer. Use caution here, and simply interrupt by re-stating or re-phrasing your question. If the applicant insists on bad-mouthing a former employer, listen politely and then gracefully end the interview. Look for applicants that put a positive spin on their work experience instead and are seeking changes such as a more physically active job, or greater contact with people, etc.

7. Is the applicant prepared for the interview? Preparing includes practicing your answers to possible interview questions as well as researching the company. Ask questions such as, "What do you know about this company"? If the applicant stumbles with answers, it will be obvious that they are unprepared. Also, be wary if an applicant starts talking about their personal life in the interview. Avoid it at all costs. Keep the conversation on the job duties and the applicant's ability to perform the essential functions.

8. What about the applicant's people skills? The applicant's resumé looks professional; Over the phone they were polished; But in person, you weren't impressed. Remember that an applicant's personality will have to get along with every other personality in the team. If they show any sign that they can't, look for someone else. If the applicant states that they don't like working with people, or that they are weak in people skills, be on the alert. If they offer an explanation that they are a bit shy at first or prefer to work with equipment instead, ask additional questions to try and verify the claim.

9. Did the applicant communicate their strengths? An applicant should know what his or her strengths are before they interview. As a hiring manager, you should try hard to expose an applicant's weaknesses by asking some very tough interview questions. Prepare and practice how you can directly ask an applicant to reveal their weaknesses, and take note of how they respond. If an applicant has no idea of their strengths, they will likely have no idea of what value they can bring to the job.

10. Did the applicant really sell him or herself? Most people find it a bit difficult to talk about them selves in a "self-important" way, especially when they are put on the spot. Applicants however, should be convincing as to why you should choose them over someone else. It's also important for you as the hiring manager to understand what characteristics you would like to see in your employees. For example, what factors make you choose to purchase a specific product? The reasons for your choice are the same as ones you would use to choose a good employee.

There are many tips, tricks and methods that will aide you in making a good hiring decision however these ten tips are among the most important. Remember that hiring is a choice and it is your responsibility to insure you are avoiding anything that would present problems for you and your company down the road. For greater success, try learning to formulate better interview questions, being better prepared and ensure a thorough understanding of the job description. You'll be amazed with the results.